A bite-sized summary of the UK Burden of Injury Study, highlighting the importance of CLAHRC-NDL's Impact of Injuries Study, which is measuring the longer term effects of injuries on people's lives and exploring how services can enhance recovery.

Who?
Adults and children (5 years+) who have had an injury

Findings...
• Impact of conditions is measured in disability adjusted life years (DALYs) – combining years lost due to deaths and the years lived with a disability for specific conditions
• Injuries resulted in 1.8 million DALYs in the UK in 2005; 2.6 times more than previously estimated
• 82% of the DALYs are due to the years that people live with disabilities rather than the years lost due to deaths from injuries
• Two thirds of the years that people live with disabilities come from less severe injuries that result in people attending emergency departments; only one third are severe enough to need admission to hospital
A valid understanding of the burden of injury is important so that its impact on public health can be accurately known.

In turn, this allows strategic policies to be made, health services to make appropriate plans and prioritise prevention efforts.

Previous studies measuring the burden of injury have used experts or panels of lay people to make judgements about how disabling different injuries are.

A longitudinal study of adults and children aged 5 years and over – with a range of injuries attending emergency departments or admitted to hospital after an injury – measured patients’ disability at 1, 4 and 12 months after an injury.

Results were combined with routinely available data on emergency department attendances and hospital admissions for injury and deaths from injuries to estimate the total number of injury-related DALYs in the UK in 2005.

The authors found that “the global proportion of DALYs from injury is larger than previously estimated” and “there is already evidence that policy and research responses to injury are grossly inadequate, based upon the previous estimates of the burden.”

References